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ABSTRACT

This survey compared remedial reading students' grades in introductory college courses with their performance in the remedial reading program. The introductory college course grades of the following three sets of students were examined: students who had successfully completed remedial instruction, students who had received a "D" grade or lower, and students who had withdrawn from remedial instruction but had continued in their other college courses. Results showed that successful completion of the remedial reading program enhanced remedial students' academic achievements in their introductory college courses. The study concluded that students in remedial reading programs should be required to successfully complete the program before attempting college courses whose content has a linguistic emphasis. (RL)

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INTRODUCTORY COLLEGE COURSE GRADES OF REMEDIAL READING STUDENTS - A SURVEY Spring, 1975 Semester

Clara Franklin Alexander

Many colleges have remedial programs in an attempt to help bright, but underachieving students develop the language skills which they will need to succeed in college. The data for this report was obtained from an urban college which at the time had a special remediation division. The aim of this survey was to evaluate the effectiveness of the remedial reading component of the program. The Remedial Reading Program had among its objectives to help students learn to interpret written materials so that they would succeed in the required introductory or college survey courses which most freshmen take. Such introductory or survey courses are Introduction to Political Science, Introduction to Sociology, Introduction to Psychology, Introduction to Business, Introduction to the Health Sciences, and Introduction to Natural Science.

The Remedial Reading Program consisted of two levels: Basic Reading and Advanced Reading. Students

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who passed both courses by passing criterion-referenced skill tests were then free to begin taking traditional college introductory courses. The question or problem was, did the Remedial Reading Program help students to succeed in linguistically-oriented introductory college courses? In this paper linguistically-oriented courses are those which involve more use of narrative language than courses such as math or chemistry.

Procedures: One section of each of the above introductory courses was randomly selected. Grade sheets were obtained from the Registrar's Office at the end of the semester and the names of all students who had been and who still were enrolled in the Remedial Reading Program were checked off. The grades of these students were ananyzed to determine which of the Remedial Reading Program students had completed their remediation before taking the introductory college course, which had dropped out of Remedial Reading, and which students had gone though the remedial reading sequence but had received a grade of D or lower. This survey is concerned with these three categories of Remedial Reading students:

1. Those who had successfully completed the remedial reading sequence prior to taking an introductory college course.

2. Those who had dropped out, withdrawn, or who had not yet completed the reading sequence.

3. Those who had taken the Remedial reading sequence but received a grade of D or less.

The introductory college course grades of each category were then examined and grouped under each category.

Findings: Thirty-five reading students were involved in this survey. Ten were in category #1 above, eighteen in category #2, and seven were in category #3. Students who had successfully completed the reading courses prior to taking the introductory college courses received the highest percentage of successful grades. Sixty-six percent of these students received grades of C or better. In contrast, forty-two percent of the students who had withdrawn from reading, or who were taking the second part of remedial reading

simultaneously while taking the introductory courses received grades of C or better. Twenty-eight percent of the students who had taken the reading sequence but received a grade of D or less earned grades of C or higher in an introductory college course. This data may be seen in Table 1.

The mean grade point average in the Introductory courses for each of the three categories of students can be seen in Table 2.

Conclusions: The educational significance of the foregoing is clear. Those students who completed the reading remediation courses with grades of C or higher tended to succeed in the introductory college courses which they attempted. Students who tried to take remediation and regular courses concurrently, or who dropped remedial reading and took the college courses did not succeed, generally, in grades attained. Students who did poorly in remedial reading also tended to do poorly in regular introductory college courses.

Most students do not like the idea of being programmed into remedial reading courses. Many feel that they cannot afford the time and some feel that they simply do not need

remediation. It is clear, however, from study of the outcome of this semester, that students who overcome any resistance to remediation tended to be successful.

Although the number of remedial students in this report is relatively small, it does not constitute a sample - it includes all of the remedial reading students who attempted linguistically - oriented introductory college courses in that semester. An inescapable conclusion is that those students who had completed the required remedial reading sequence prior to taking introductory college courses tended to be successful and as a group, acquired a mean GPA of 2.45.

Recommendations: It is recommended that students should be required to complete reading remediation before attempting courses which have a linguistic emphasis. It is also recommended that components of the remedial reading program be examined to determine which have had the greatest influence on the success of the students or whether the combination of components affected this positive trend. Finally, it is recommended that colleges offer reading remediation to students who need it because they can benefit from such support.

In conclusion, it should be noted that those students who need reading remediation, took it, passed it with a C grade or better and tended to succeed also in introductory college courses. This is the aim of remediation - not to lower academic standards, but to bring educationally deprived students up to the academic standards of society at large.

TABLE 1 N = 35

Introductory College Course Grades of Remedial Reading Students

CATEGORIES OF STUDENTS								
1. Successfully completed Remedial Reading with Grade of C or higher			2. Withdrew, Dropped or took Introductory course while still in Remedial reading			3. Completed Remedial Reading with Grade of D or less		
Grades								
B+		2			0			0
B	66%	4		42%	1		28%	0
C+		1			3			1
C		1			4			1
D		1			0			0
F		1			4			2
WF	34%	0		58%	5		72%	2
Inc		2			2			1
WP		0			1			0
Totals		* 12			** 20			7

* Two students took two courses
** Two students took two courses

TABLE 2 N = 35

Mean Grade Point Average of the Three Categories of Reading Students in Introductory College Courses

	CATEGORIES		
	1. Successfully completed Remedial Reading with Grade of C or higher	2. Withdrew, Dropped or took Introductory course while still in Remedial Reading	3. Completed Remedia Reading with Grade of D or less
Mean Grade Point Average	2.45	1.08	0.75